

NATIONAL DEFENCE

MARITIME AND AERIAL SURVEILLANCE AND CONTROL— ENHANCEMENT OF ARTIC CAPABILITIES— GOVERNMENT POLICY

Hon. Gerald J. Comeau: Honourable senators, I should like to quote from the 1993 Liberal Foreign Policy Handbook, which promised that:

A Liberal defence program will include a continued role in maritime and aerial surveillance and control, with particular emphasis on enhancing Arctic capabilities.

I have done some research, and I have been unable to find that any action has been taken to enhance Arctic research. As we know, and as was raised by my colleague the Honourable Senator Forrestall, there has even been a 15 per cent reduction in capability of the new search and rescue helicopters. Therefore, would the leader agree that her government's promise to enhance Arctic capabilities has been, in fact, another broken promise?

Hon. Joyce Fairbairn (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I certainly would not agree with the honourable senator. However, I will try to find some information for you on the status of that commitment.

HUMAN RIGHTS

IMPOSITION OF EMBARGOES AND SANCTIONS AGAINST TRANSGRESSOR COUNTRIES—GOVERNMENT POLICY

Hon. A. Raynell Andreychuk: Honourable senators, the government has indicated consistently that it is not in favour of either sanctions or embargoes against countries, since it does not wish to isolate them on matters of differences in policy. On October 17 of this year, we were informed by Senator Graham that Canada was not contemplating imposing an embargo on any country in the world at present. However, soon after, at the Commonwealth conference, we learned that the government was contemplating sanctions against one country, that being Nigeria.

• (1440)

Could the leader explain what processes or factors are now being considered when preparing a decision to impose an embargo against another country? Are there any other countries upon which the government is contemplating the imposition of sanctions or embargoes? What does the Minister of Foreign Affairs mean when he states that he is looking at this matter very carefully?

Hon. Joyce Fairbairn (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I will be pleased to speak with my colleague the Minister of Foreign Affairs. As Senator

Andreychuk will know, the country under consideration at the moment is Nigeria. The Canadian government is working not only within the Commonwealth but also the United Nations to find the best multilateral approach to dealing with the tragic and unacceptable situation which has developed in that country.

Senator Andreychuk: If the leader is bringing in an answer at a later date, perhaps she could also bring in the reply to the following: The Honourable Minister Ouellet stated on November 9 that the Liberal government ought not to isolate any person or any leader of any country or any government because we do not share their policies. However, he also stated that, in extreme cases, Canada could scale back development assistance to countries which persist in abusing the rights of its citizens. Do we need to wait until there is an execution before contemplating such matters, as in the case of Nigeria, or will the government begin its considerations once it becomes evident that there is persistent abuse?

In the case of Nigeria, for example, the rule of law was not present. Democratic principles were not present. The person in charge of the country was there by military means only. The repression and degradation of the people had existed for quite a considerable time. Is it only after an execution that Canada begins to consider scaling back its development assistance?

[Translation]

FISHERIES AND OCEANS

TIMELINESS OF ANNUAL DEPARTMENTAL REPORT— GOVERNMENT POLICY

Hon. Roch Bolduc: My question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. I received this morning the 1994-95 report of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans.

Is it normal for Parliament to receive a departmental report 18 months after the end of the fiscal year? In your opinion, did the minister responsible for this report follow up as he should have done?

[English]

Hon. Joyce Fairbairn (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I will certainly look into Senator Bolduc's question.

DELAYED ANSWER TO ORAL QUESTION

Hon. B. Alasdair Graham (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I have a response to a question raised in the Senate on May 11, 1995 by the Honourable Senator Prud'homme regarding lobbyists involved in the acquisition of submarines.